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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, January 18, 1932.

(NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

Subject: "Midwinter Breakfasts." From the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

"But jimmy crickets, mother! Look what time it is! I haven't time to eat breakfast -- the oatmeal's so hot I can't eat it! I'll be late, mother, and then I'll have to stay in! Well, I'll drink the milk -- but I know I'll be late! Where's my geography? The baby's got it, and he's spilled milk all over North America! I can't help it if he does cry -- I've got to have my book. Goodbye, mother. Sure, I'll hurry home." And Jimmie is out the door, buttoning his coat as he runs down the street.

Have you ever been present, when a scene like this was enacted? Mornings when everybody gets up late, and there isn't time for the school children to eat breakfast, or perhaps there's just time enough for them to choke down a few bites, gulp a glass of milk, and run.

A meal eaten in a hurry does not nourish the body as does a meal eaten slowly. Some one has said that "As a nation, we lack that gracious sense of leisure which should be the accompaniment of every meal." If I had my way, I'd start a "Half-Hour for Breakfast" club, and see that every school child had a life-membership.

I'd see that he had a good breakfast, too; one that would be worth spending 25 or 30 minutes with. A good breakfast for healthy, growing school children includes milk, fruit, hot cereal or breadstuff, and fat in some form, such as bacon, cream, or egg yolks.

Breakfasts need not be monotonous, just because certain foods should be represented in them. I have here a list of four breakfast suggestions, planned by the Menu Specialist. They are not planned especially for children-they are all around breakfasts, good for children and grownups, alike. Of course, in each case, "beverage" means milk for the children, and milk, cocoa, coffee, or whatever drink the grown-ups want in the morning.

I shall read these menus slowly, while you write them.

Breakfast Number One: Orange and grapefruit juice mixed; Creamed chipped beef on toast; Tart jelly and a beverage.

Breakfast Number Two: Raw or baked apples; Scrambled eggs and brains; Crusty Corn Bread; and a Beverage. If you have time, you might pare and quarter the apples in the kitchen. The children will probably like their apples, au naturel, for there's something intriguing about a rosy apple, as a first course, for breakfast. The corn bread is to be baked in the long narrow shapes, somewhat like an ear of corn split down the center.

Breakfast Number Three: Prunes and apricots cooked together; Fried Mush and Bacon; and a Beverage. Some people like sirup on the last piece or two of fried mush.

Breakfast Number Four: Grapefruit; Broiled Salt Mackerel; Toast and Orange Marmalade; and a Beverage.

I shall read you the directions for Broiled Salt Mackerel; write them, if you like. Broiled Salt Mackerel:

Select a fat salt mackerel. Soak overnight in cold water to cover. If sufficient salt has been removed, the fish can be placed under the flame of the broiling oven meat side up and cooked slowly to a light brown. Put on a hot platter skin side down, pour melted butter over the fish and garnish with thin slices of lemon and parsley.

If the fish is still very salty after soaking, place it in a skillet, cover it with cold water, allow the water to come to a boil, and pour it off. Then broil according to the directions I gave you.

Now we can turn to the Question and Answer Department -- there's always something interesting in this section. Here's a question from a listener who wants to know how to clean porcelain bath-tubs. I'll send you a copy of "Housecleaning Made Easier." I'm sure it tells how to clean bath-tubs.

By the way, did you know that the first American bathtub was built in 1833? Only 99 years ago. The first American bathtub was made of mahogany. It was 7 feet long and 4 feet wide. It was lined with sheet lead, and weighed more than 2,000 pounds. I gather that the American people didn't care much for bathtubs. The authorities of Boston City made bathing unlawful, and Virginia put a tax of $300 on each bathtub. Just imagine that -- if you can. Today the American public is buying more than one and one-half million bathtubs a year. Just imagine <u>that</u> -- all those bathtubs, which have to be cleaned every day.

Next question: "Is there any danger in serving cranberry sauce and milk at the same meal?"

It is all right to serve cranberry sauce and milk at the same meal. Cranberries contain more acid than most other foods, but the cranberries merely curdle the milk. Milk is always curdled in the stomach anyway, by the digestive juice. The curdling of milk in the stomach is a normal process.

So if you have acid fruits, such as oranges and grapefruit, for breakfast, followed by cereal and cream, or a glass of milk, don't be afraid that your digestion will be upset.

Next: "Is it harmful to eat fish and milk together?"

It is not. If the fish is fresh, or properly preserved, and the milk is perfectly fresh there's no reason why they should not be eaten together. Most people do eat fish and milk together, in the form of chowders, or milk gravies. Creamed fish on toast, or served with potatoes, is a favorite dish, and is often given to children.

What a lot of superstitions there are about foods! In grandmother's day, such foods as tomatoes, lettuce and oranges, were on the danger list. Now these same foods are highly recommended by food specialists.

It takes a long time for superstitions to die out. Uncle Ebenezer told me something interesting last night, about toads. Toads are ugly animals, and they have always been connected with curious beliefs, and superstitions. There are lots of people, even today, who believe that warts are produced by handling toads. Small boys believe that if a toad is killed, and turned on its back, there will be rain, before night. Then there is a superstition that good fortune will come to you, if a toad is found in the cellar of your new home. But the most curious superstition of all is that children who stammer will be cured, if a toad is rubbed on the backs of their necks. As for me, I'd rather stammer a little, than have a cold and clammy toad laid on the back of my neck. Wouldn't you?

Well, this isn't getting us anywhere. One more question, and we'll call it a day.

"Please tell me," writes an eastern listener, "whether there is any way to bake a large fish without having it fall to pieces when served."

In baking a large whole fish, you might use a piece of clean cheese-cloth, dipped in grease, as a lining for the pan. This is a help, in lifting the fish from the pan to the platter, when the fish is ready to serve. Baked fish is so tender that it is difficult to take up a large one from the pan, without destroying the shape.

Tomorrow: More about Kitchens.

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